

REMARKS

Specification Objections. In the Non-Final Office Action, Examiner Minh D. A objected to the specification under 37 C.F.R. §1.71 as being so incomprehensible as to preclude a reasonable search of the prior art. The Applicant has amended the specification herein to correct a recitation of “1,84” to “1.84” and a recitation of “2,2” to “2.2”. No new matter was introduced by the aforementioned amendments to the specification. Withdrawal of the objection to the specification is therefore respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections. In the Non-Final Office Action, Examiner Minh D. A rejected pending claims 1-13 on various grounds. The Applicant responds to each rejection as subsequently recited herein, and respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application:

- A. Examiner Minh D. A rejected claims 1-13 under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention

Examiner Minh D. A rejected claims 1-13 as being indefinite due to the recitation of “a ratio of at least 2,2” in claims 1 and 7; of “a range of 2,2 to 7” in claims 2 and 8; and of “the ratio is about 5” in claims 3 and 9. The Applicant has amended claims 1 and 7 herein to further clarify what the ratio refers to and recite “a ratio of at least 2.2”; claims 2 and 8 herein to recite “a range of 2.2 to 7”. Claims 3 and 9 depend from amended claim 1 and claim 7, respectively.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-13 under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2 as being indefinite is therefore respectfully requested.

B. Examiner Minh D. A rejected claims 1-13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,426,597 to *Rast* et al.

The Applicant has thoroughly considered Examiner Minh D. A's remarks concerning the patentability of claims 1-13 over *Rast*. The Applicant has also thoroughly read *Rast*. To warrant this §103(a) rejection of claims 1-13, each and every element as set forth in the independent claims 1, 7 and 13 must have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention based on a reading of *Rast*. See, MPEP §2141. The Applicant respectfully asserts that a careful review of *Rast* reveals the fact that *Rast* teaches away from "the oscillator oscillating a lamp voltage at a first high frequency during ignition of the lamp and the oscillator oscillating the lamp voltage at a second high frequency during normal operation of the lamp after its ignition, with the first frequency being higher than the second frequency by a ratio of at least 2.2" as recited in independent claims 1, 7 and 13 herein.

As to the traversal, *Rast* teaches that gas discharge lamps behave in a manner that is comparatively difficult to control and in an unstable manner until they have been fully heated. To overcome this behavior by a gas discharge lamp, as shown in FIG. 1, *Rast* teaches an oscillation of a lamp voltage u_{EL} across a lamp EL at a high frequency during ignition of lamp EL, and an oscillation of lamp voltage u_{EL} across lamp EL at a low frequency during a normal operation of lamp EL. See, *Rast* at column 12, line 52 to column 13, line 22.

Specifically, referring to FIG. 1, *Rast* discloses controllable switches S1-S5 for controlling an ignition and a normal operation of lamp EL. During ignition of lamp EL, (1) switches S1 and S2 are opened, (2) switch S5 is closed, and (3) switches S3 and S4 are alternatively opened and closed at a high frequency. As a result, lamp voltage u_{EL} is generated to ignite lamp EL. During normal operation of lamp EL, (1) switch S5 is opened, (2) switches S3 and S4 are alternatively opened and closed at a low frequency, (3) switch S1 is opened and closed at a high frequency in response to switch S3 being opened and switch S4 being closed, and (4) switch S2 is opened and closed at a high frequency in response to switch S3 being closed and switch S4 being opened. As a result, an inductor current i_{L2} is oscillated through inductor L2

at a high frequency and lamp voltage u_{EL} is oscillated across lamp EL at a low frequency as evidenced by FIG. 2a. See, *Rast* at column 7, line 64 to column 12, line 51.

During the normal operation of lamp EL, a ratio of the high frequency oscillation of inductor current i_{L2} through inductor L2 and the low frequency oscillation of lamp voltage u_{EL} across lamp EL can be 1000:1 as taught in the background section of *Rast*. See, *Rast* at column 2, lines 38-49. However, this ratio is inapplicable to the aforementioned limitation of independent claims 1, 7 and 13. More importantly, *Rast* clearly teaches away from a high frequency oscillation of lamp voltage u_{EL} across lamp EL during the normal operation of lamp EL by teaching the low frequency oscillation of lamp voltage u_{EL} across lamp EL during the normal operation lamp EL as being necessary to control a stable operation of lamp EL.

Withdrawal of the rejection of independent claims 1, 7 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Rast* is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 2-6 depend from independent claim 1. Therefore, dependent claims 2-6 include all of the elements and limitations of independent claim 1. It is therefore respectfully submitted by the Applicant that dependent claims 2-6 are allowable over *Rast* for at least the same reason as set forth herein with respect to independent claim 1 being allowable over *Rast*. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 2-6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Rast* is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 8-12 depend from independent claim 7. Therefore, dependent claims 8-12 include all of the elements and limitations of independent claim 7. It is therefore respectfully submitted by the Applicant that dependent claims 8-12 are allowable over *Rast* for at least the same reason as set forth herein with respect to independent claim 7 being allowable over *Rast*. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 8-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Rast* is therefore respectfully requested.

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SUMMARY

The Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-13 as listed herein fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §§102, 103 and 112. In view of the foregoing, favorable consideration and early passage to issue of the present application is respectfully requested. If any points remain in issue that may best be resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, Examiner Minh D. A is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,
Johannes Maria Van Meurs

PHILIPS INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
& STANDARDS
P.O. Box 3001
Briarcliff Manor, New York 10510

/Chris M. Ries, 45799/

Chris M. Ries
Registration No. 45,799
Attorney for Applicant

WOODARD, EMHARDT, MORIARTY,
MCNETT, AND HENRY, LLC.
111 Monument Circle, Suite 3700
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-5137

/Darrin Wesley Harris, 40636/

Darrin Wesley Harris
Registration No. 40,636
Attorney for Applicant